Any person who contravenes any provision of the proposed legislation or any rules made there under shall be liable to be punished with fine.

State Governments were consulted while formulating the proposed legislation. Comments were received from State Government of Maharashtra, Goa and West Bengal and these comments were duly taken into consideration while finalizing the proposed bill.

WHO recommendations on AIDS

86. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Health Organisation has recommended that the doctors should urge all their patients to undergo the HIV test;

(b) whether Government propose to implement the WHO recommendations;

(c) whether Government have consulted NGOs working in the field in this regard;

(d) whether the HIV figures released so far, have found to be incorrect; and

(e) if so, the steps taken by Government to correct these figures?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes, Sir. The World Health Organisation has recently released 'guidance on provider-initiated HIV testing and counseling' which recommends that in a generalized epidemic, doctors should urge all their patients, regardless of reason for coming to the health facility, to undergo HIV testing and counseling. The guidance does not recommend HIV testing and counseling to all persons attending health facilities in settings with low and concentrated epidemics, except for those who present to health facilities with signs and symptoms suggestive of underlying HIV infection, including tuberculosis and to children known to have been exposed perinatally to HIV. The guidance recommends that in low and concentrated epidemics the decision to implement provider initiated testing and counseling should be guided by an assessment of the epidemiological and social context. It recommends that consideration may be given to health facilities/services such as STI services, health services for most at risk populations, antenatal, child birth and post partum services and tuberculosis services for implementation of provider initiated testing and counseling.

(b) Provider initiated testing and counseling is being implemented in the Integrated Counseling and Testing Centres (ICTCs) only for clients referred by medical providers such as patients who present in a health facility with symptoms and signs suggestive of HIV/AIDS including patients with pneumonia, tuberculosis or persistent diarrohea, patients attending health facilities for conditions that could be associated with HIV such as sexually transmitted infections and for pregnant women who register at antenatal clinics.

(c) Operational Guidelines related to implementation of Integrated counseling and testing services were finalized in consultation with Technical Resource Group which comprises of experts including representatives of non-governmental organizations.

(d) and (e) The new 2006 estimates released by the National AIDS Control Organization, indicate that national adult HIV prevalence in India is 0.36%, which corresponds to an estimated 2 million to 3.1 million people living with HIV in the country. These estimates are more accurate and reliable as it is based on better data from a large number of sources using internationally recommended methods, as they are based on an expanded surveillance system and a revised and enhanced methodology. Global experience from surveys in 30 countries show that sentinel surveillance data tend to produce higher estimate.

As part of its continuing effort to know its epidemic better, the Indian Government has greatly expanded and improved its surveillance system in recent years and increased the number of population groups covered. In 2006, the government created 400 new sentinel surveillance sites and facilitated National Family Health Survey-3, which is a population-based survey.

The use of additional data sources in addition to the improved methodologies have resulted in a lower and more robust estimate.

Bird-flu affected States

87. SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) how many States in the North-East are affected by bird-flu;

(b) whether bird-flu has spread to other States; and

(c) if so, whether any human casualties, both fatal and non-fatal, have been reported?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Only one State in North-East has been affected by Bird flu which was notified in Village Chingmeirong, East Imphal district of Manipur on 25.7.2007. The disease appears to be limited and restricted to a small area without further evidence of spread.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No human casualties fatal or otherwise have been reported.

Health education package in Schools

88. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is proposing a health education package in schools;

(b) if so, what would be the focus of the package; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), a broad framework for implementation of School Health Programme has been circulated to all the States/UTs for incorporation in the State Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs) which provides for innovative school health